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thread of our national history by means of the records of the State Department, and follow it through the fitful changes, yet steady persistence of a century and more, is to give a total impression of a phase of our national life hardly to be gained in any other way. It emphasizes, too, the vital importance and need of a disciplined and trained diplomatic service to treat successfully intricate and delicate questions. Curious to state, until one reflects a moment, the most far-reaching questions that have arisen in our history were those at the very outset of our national life, which were successfully carried through by Franklin, Jay, and the Fathers of the Republic. Besides these two named, John Quincy Adams and Daniel Webster are particularly admired and praised by Mr. Foster, while Thomas Jefferson and some others come in for raps. A special chapter on the Monroe Doctrine, largely expressive of the views of the present administration, closes the work.

A SHORT HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE. Designed primarily for use in schools and colleges. By Walter C. Bronson, A.M., Professor of English Literature in Brown University. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. 1900.

There has been an inundation of histories of American literature in the last few years. Recently we had Mr. Pancoast's, Miss Bates's, Mr. Carpenter's, and now we have Mr. Bronson's and Mr. Wendell's, and we are soon to expect others. A consensus of these might prove suggestive, and we may be able to come back to this in a later issue. Mr. Bronson has been able to take advantage of the unusual richness of the Brown University and Providence libraries and probably others near at hand in and about Boston, and the bibliographical material appended is particularly valuable. The little volume is written in an easy, agreeable literary style, something not always true of "literary" histories—names, dates, and references being relegated where they belong, to footnotes and appendices.

The history of the literature is told principally by a succession of narratives of the individual authors, and naturally the New England school receives the greatest share of at-

tention. But a clearer historical perspective would have emphasized in our national period first the Middle States, then New England's supremacy, due largely to the quickening intellectual impulse of the Unitarian and Transcendental movements, and later again New England's relative, if not actual, loss. The lack in the present case is partly due to the circumstance that while the volume purports to come down to 1900, in effect it closes with 1870, when New England was unquestionably supreme. The history of the intellectual, educational, and literary interests of the thirty years after 1870, to some of us the most fascinating in our history, by reason of its universality, cannot be summarily disposed of in ten pages even in a school history. Surely our American History and Biography, too, ought not to be quite so far neglected; for while we are more ambitious for our poets and fiction writers, if we have anything firmly established in our present American literature, it is an American school of History, and some suggestion of this ought to be made clear.

But in a school history it is certainly safer to emphasize the earlier than the later period, and in that period the chief landmarks are both sympathetically and adequately treated in the present booklet, and what it does it does well, and must be commended cordially.

TUSKEGEE: Its Story and Its Work. By Max Bennett Thrasher. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co. 1900. \$1.

This little volume is a comprehensive, first-hand account of the institution that is doing the most beneficent work for the colored race in the world. The writer gives full descriptions of the various industries in operation at the Institute, illustrates copiously with pictures from photographs, and quotes verbatim the students' own account of how they utilized what they gained at Tuskegee out in the world; for he has visited their homes, and tells what he saw straightforwardly. The book forms an interesting compendium, and its facts should be generally known. A minor matter, perhaps, is the lack of sympathetic comprehension and sound knowledge of conditions among the colored people before the war; but that is a difficult question for any one of either race, North or South, to deal with just now.